Course Information

Senior Capstone II

CSD U-440

Student Name ____________________
Course
Senior Capstone II

Course Code
CSD U-440

Faculty
School of Education Faculty

Department
Communicative Sciences and Disorders

Prerequisites
None

Length of Course
One semester

Degree
Bachelor of Arts

Credit
3 credit hours

Assessment Tasks
Assessment 1: Senior Capstone Project

Prepared by
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Introduction

UM Mission Statements

MISSION STATEMENT
THE UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA

The University of Montana capitalizes on its unique strengths to create knowledge, provide an active learning environment for students, and offer programs and services responsive to the needs of Montanans. The University delivers education and training on its four campuses and through telecommunications to sites inside and outside of Montana. With public expectations on the rise, the University asks its students, faculty, and staff to do and accomplish even more than they have in the past. The dedication to education for and throughout life reflects the commitment to service learning and community building on and off the campuses. The University enhances its programs through continuous quality review for improvement and remains fully accountable to the citizenry through annual audits and performance evaluations.

MISSION STATEMENT
THE UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA-MISSOULA

The University of Montana-Missoula pursues academic excellence as indicated by the quality of curriculum and instruction, student performance, and faculty professional accomplishments. The University accomplishes this mission, in part, by providing unique educational experiences through the integration of the liberal arts, graduate study, and professional training with international and interdisciplinary emphases. Through its graduates, the University also seeks to educate competent and humane professionals and informed, ethical, and engaged citizens of local and global communities. Through its programs and the activities of faculty, staff, and students, The University of Montana-Missoula provides basic and applied research, technology transfer, cultural outreach, and service benefiting the local community, region, state, nation and the world.

Welcome

Insert Welcome Message Here
Course Information

About the Instructor

Details about the instructor are to be inserted here.

Contact details are listed below:

Phone:
Email:
Mobile:
Office Location:
Postal Address:

Course Organization

The Capstone Experience, usually completed near the end of baccalaureate studies, integrates liberal learning with specialized knowledge. Each Capstone emphasizes sharing of ideas, synthesis, and critical, informed reflection as significant precursors to action, and each includes student initiative in defining and investigating problems or projects.

The Department of Communicative Sciences and Disorders offers a unique Senior Capstone experience in which students learn about clinical and research processes in speech-language pathology and audiology through guided clinical observations and engage in independent research through their Capstone papers and poster presentations.

This is the second of two courses in which the student completes a capstone project. Senior Capstone I considers the selection and design of the project. It is a paced plan whereby the student selects the topic, performs a literature review, provides questions or hypotheses to be answered or tested presents the idea to the Department of Communicative Sciences and Disorders. In this course, Senior Capstone II, each student works directly with a staff member to complete the project.

The Capstone papers and presentations afford students the opportunity to explore self-selected topics while they learn critical skills in literature review, data collection, analysis and professional writing. Each year in the Spring Semester, the hard work of the CSD students is highlighted at the CSD Poster Presentation Event.
Learning objectives

The student addresses the questions through a guided experience with the students Capstone supervisor. The student acquires data and provides results and discussion for the research or clinical project.

Hours

To be filled in as appropriate

Class times

To be filled in as appropriate

Class Attendance Policy

Students are expected to attend all class meetings and complete all assignments for courses in which they are enrolled. The instructor may excuse brief and occasional absences for reasons of illness, injury, family emergency, or participation in a University sponsored activity. (University sponsored activities include for example, field trips, ASUM service, music or drama performances, and intercollegiate athletics). The instructor shall excuse absences for reasons of military service or mandatory public service.

Study Commitments

Ten hours per week are required. This time should be spent completing the required reading for this course, reflecting on your reading, completing the weekly activities and preparing your written assignment(s).

Occupational Health and Safety

There are no out of the ordinary risks associated with this unit.
Content overview

The broad aims for the Senior Capstone II are:

- To provide students with a broad base in contemporary theory and research
- To bring diverse communicative sciences and disorders subject areas together by pointing to shared themes, issues, problems and techniques
- To expose and sensitize students to an array of methodological and data treatment issues
- To better acquaint students with, and understand, the actual process of research
- To demonstrate how research can contribute to understanding and solving real-world problems
- To promote critical or evaluative thinking (e.g., about theory, methods, bases for ‘knowledge’ and the use of scientific principles or techniques in applied settings) and to provide a “research posture” in clinical or non-clinical applications

Learning approaches

Classroom Lectures

Blackboard

Blackboard is the University of Montana’s on-line learning system. It is critically important that you maintain an accurate e-mail address with the University of Montana.

In this unit, Blackboard will be used to:

- Provide important announcements regarding your course
- Provide weekly discussion questions and responses
- Provide assignment documents
- Provide a digital dropbox for completed assignments

You will need to connect to the Internet to access it, at:

http://umonline.umt.edu/
Study resources

Required texts:
No text is required.

Recommended reference texts:


Support services and resources

Student Resources

Two tutoring programs are available to students, one administered by the TRiO and the other by the Undergraduate Advising Center; both are located in Corbin Hall. More information on TRiO, visit TRiO at Lommasson Center 154, call 406-243-5032, or log on to www.umt.edu/eop. The Undergraduate Advising Center is located in the Lommasson Center 269, or you can visit www.umt.edu/ucoll/.

The Writing Center is available to help you improve your writing skills. Writing instructors are available to help you plan and develop your thoughts. For more information, visit them online at: http://www.umt.edu/writingcenter/, email growl@mso.umt.edu or call (406) 243-2266.

Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities are encouraged to plan ahead and can contact Disability Services for Students (DSS). For additional information, contact DSS Director Jim Marks, Lommasson Center 154 or (406) 243-2243 (Voice/Text) or jim.marks@umontana.edu. Please visit http://www.umt.edu/dss/ to find details about the available services.

Foreign Exchange Students and Scholars

The office of Foreign Student and Scholar Services (FSSS) is available for general counselling and provides direct support services, consultation, and liaison. Staff members at FSSS are available to help with academic advising, cultural adjustment, financial problems, and other issues. The FSSS office is in the Lommasson Center, Room 219. For more information, contact fsss@umontana.edu or visit http://ordway.umt.edu/sa/fsss/.
## DIRECTORY OF ASSISTANCE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concern</th>
<th>Contact</th>
<th>Contact details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Matters concerning the course</td>
<td>Instructor</td>
<td>Refer to the Introduction in this Course Information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General academic issues relating to your course</td>
<td>Department Chair</td>
<td>Refer to the UM website at <a href="http://www.umt.edu">http://www.umt.edu</a>. &amp; click the link to academics.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Blackboard</strong> difficulties</td>
<td>IT Helpdesk</td>
<td>Ph: (406) 243-4357 Website: <a href="http://umonline.umt.edu/">http://umonline.umt.edu/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficulties accessing your Student Computer account</td>
<td>IT Helpdesk</td>
<td>Ph: (406) 243-4357 Email:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical difficulties in PC Labs</td>
<td>UM Library</td>
<td>Ph: (406) 243-6866 Email:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library enquiries</td>
<td>UM Bookstore</td>
<td>Ph: (406) 243-1234 Fax: (406) 243-2001 email: <a href="mailto:contact@umtbookstore.com">contact@umtbookstore.com</a> website:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help with library databases, Internet searching and Reference queries</td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="http://www.umtbookstore.com">http://www.umtbookstore.com</a> University of Montana Bookstore</td>
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<tr>
<td>Purchasing of text books and stationery</td>
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<td>University Center, 1st &amp; 2nd Floor</td>
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<tr>
<td>General administration enquiries e.g. admissions/ enrolments,</td>
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<td>Ph: Email:</td>
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<tr>
<td>course information, graduation</td>
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</table>

**Course Information**
### Class Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WEEK</th>
<th>LECTURE TOPIC</th>
<th>READING</th>
<th>ASSIGNMENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1</td>
<td>Class Meeting 1</td>
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<td>Week 2</td>
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<td>Week 3</td>
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<td>Week 4</td>
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<td>Week 5</td>
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<td>Week 6</td>
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<td>Week 7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 8</td>
<td>Class Meeting 2</td>
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<td>Week 9</td>
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<td>Week 10</td>
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<td>Week 11</td>
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<td>Week 12</td>
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<td>Week 13</td>
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<td>Week 14</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 15</td>
<td>Class Meeting 3</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Project Due</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: The reading and assignments for each week are not specified in the table.*
Assignment Information

1 Assessment item is required.

All of these tasks must be completed for you to obtain a pass in this course.

I would expect a significant commitment on your part to achieve a deep and effective understanding of topics in this course.

I would therefore expect a high commitment to learning.

Note: unless stated otherwise, the due date for an assignment refers to the date by which the assignment must be received by the Instructor.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ASSIGNMENT ITEM</th>
<th>FOCUS</th>
<th>PERCENT VALUE</th>
<th>LENGTH</th>
<th>DUE DATE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assignment 1</td>
<td>Senior Capstone Project</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
<td>Finals Week</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Delivery and submission of Assignments

Note: Please remember to attach the assignment cover sheet to your assignment and retain your own copy of the assignment.

Cover sheets can be obtained either from the appropriate section of *Blackboard*.

Delivery of Capstone Project

Students design and carry out an independent empirical investigation and report their findings in a project of between 10,000 and 15,000 words in length.

Note, that you are expected to keep your own copy of the assignments. On the written assignment, please attach a cover sheet with the following details:

Your name and student number
Course code and title
Date submitted
Helpful tips for submission of your Assignments

There are several ways that you can assist with the efficient processing and return of your assignments.

- Turn in your assignments on time. Additional time will not be readily offered.

Extensions and late submission

Note: Apply for extensions before the due date.

You must apply for extensions at least 2 university business days before the due date.

All extension requests must be in writing to the Instructor.

If you do not follow these procedures and have an extension formally approved, your assignment will be considered late if it arrives after the due date.

Extenuating circumstances do arise from time to time such as illness or a family crisis. In such circumstances, you are required to contact your tutor to discuss your options. Poor time management is not considered an extenuating circumstance and is not grounds for an extension. Normally work commitments will not be sufficient grounds for an extension.

Resubmission

In this course, you cannot resubmit your work for reassessment.

Plagiarism Policy

Plagiarism is the presentation of the work of another without acknowledgement. As defined by the University of Montana’s Student Conduct Code, plagiarism is “Representing another person's words, ideas, data, or materials as one's own.” Staff and students may use information and ideas expressed by others, but this use must be identified by appropriate referencing.

Students who plagiarize may fail the course and may be remanded to Academic Court for a possible suspension or expulsion from the University.
More information regarding student policy, academic misconduct, and plagiarism can be found at:
http://www.umt.edu/catalog/policy_procedure.htm

Assignment and examination rules

Assignment # 1 Capstone Project
Researching and Writing Your Project
The ‘Top Ten’ Pitfalls to Avoid

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pitfall</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Delaying the commencement of writing</td>
<td>This is common among students. Often the end seems so far away that it brings a false sense of security about ‘lots of time’ being available. Other times there can be a protracted inertia about putting pen to paper. Some reasons that students give for this are ‘writer’s block’ and the fear of writing. However, writing needs to become a daily habit during your candidature. Try setting small, manageable goals for yourself each week and make sure that you write something. It is always much easier to revise your work than stare at a blank page. Also, once you start writing something, you break the ice and the ideas begin to flow. It is also a good idea to begin with a section that you know best and feel most comfortable with.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Delaying submitting your project until it is perfect</td>
<td>This is common among students. Often the end seems so far away that it brings a false sense of security about ‘lots of time’ being available. Other times there can be a protracted inertia about putting pen to paper. Some reasons that students give for this are ‘writer’s block’ and the fear of writing. However, writing needs to become a daily habit during your candidature. Try setting small, manageable goals for yourself each week and make sure that you write something. It is always much easier to revise your work than stare at a blank page. Also, once you start writing something, you break the ice and the ideas begin to flow. It is also a good idea to begin with a section that you know best and feel most comfortable with.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Beginning your project with the view that it will bring you international attention</td>
<td>This is also not a realistic expectation and inevitably will cause delays in getting started. So, from the beginning, be clear that your research degree is about fulfilling an academic requirement. You will make your life much easier. In addition, note that the process of conducting your research is more important to the readers of your project rather than</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Wanting to give up because the data has come out weird</td>
<td>This can happen if you have invested too much in your results turning out a particular way. So, when results do not turn out as expected, the whole project may seem a waste of time. However, the reality is that part of the academic process is making sense of your data no matter how it turns out. If you are challenged in this respect, talk it over with your supervisor and take some time to sift through the data with an open mind. It may be that your mental set is blocking you from interpreting the data in a novel way.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Not staying focused</td>
<td>As you go along, there will be many interesting side issues to your topic that are topics in themselves. Note their significance ‘in the big picture’ of your research but do not try to include everything that could possibly be written on your topic in your project. Leave these related topics for another research project after you have completed your degree. Remember that a lack of focus is a major complaint of readers of your project.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Not keeping your literature review up to date</td>
<td>As you need to keep abreast of the latest developments in your area, the literature review is an on-going task. Start writing a draft in the early stages of your research and add to it as new publications arise.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Choosing a methodology that is so sophisticated you feel out of your depth</td>
<td>Many a student has taken this pitfall. If you want to remain sane, just do not do it!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Wanting to change your topic and/or supervisor halfway through</td>
<td>At some stage you will probably think about doing this at least once. Most research students want to change their topic and/or supervisor at some stage, even if it is just a passing whim. However, while there will always be genuine reasons, the desire to do so is usually a knee-jerk reaction to wider problems. No matter what topic or supervisor you choose, there will always be hiccups when conducting a major piece of research.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Not documenting your references ‘as</td>
<td>When writing, you sift through an awful lot of publications for your literature review. If you leave the documentation behind, it can lead to confusion and delays. It is essential to keep track of all your sources and include them in your final report.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Not handling constructive criticism</td>
<td>Constructive criticism is an integral part of the research process. It helps you improve your work and refine your ideas. It is essential to remain open to feedback and use it to enhance your research.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**CSD U-440 Senior Capstone II**
The documenting of your references until the end, it will become an enormous task. Furthermore, there will always be a couple of findings that you cite in the text (and know you read somewhere), but later have problems tracking down the source of as you didn’t document it in full at the time. As you sift through that huge pile of publications you have accumulated you will kick yourself for this. It is truly much easier to compile your reference page as you write.

10. Doing endless re-drafts

This can occur due to a form of insecurity about writing. You feel that what you have written needs to be endlessly re-written because it’s not good enough. While redrafting is a vital stage of the writing process, you can become stuck at this stage if you are not careful. There is also always the danger of becoming so close to your work that you’re no longer objective about its quality. In this case, you may be effectively revising chapters which do not really need it. To avoid this, it’s always a good idea to leave written work for a good while before attempting to revise it. You tend to become more objective that way and can more easily identify real problems rather than imagined ones.

The Process:

Step 1: Set a timeframe

A timeframe segments the task of producing your paper into a series of steps with time limits. Setting a timeframe is useful as breaking your goal into a series of steps makes the task less daunting. In addition, placing time limits at each stage is an effective form of time management.

Setting a timeframe has other benefits too. These include:

• Calculating the time involved can be a reality check and so you tend to start immediately
• Last minute panics are effectively avoided
• Breaking down the task into a series of steps provides a sense of control over the process which results in feeling less pressured
• It is a good warming-up exercise to get you started

In devising your timeframe it is essential to include:

• Clearly defined sub-stages
  This could include analyzing/defining the topic, research/note-taking, planning an outline, writing a first draft; editing and revising, proof-reading, compiling references, and preparing the final copy
• Leeway’ time
You need to include this extra time to allow for everyday hassles which hamper progress e.g. your hard drive crashing, the book you need not being available at the time, your dog eating your first draft

- Dates.
  This means not just writing down how long a task will take but also when that particular task should be completed

### Step 2: Think carefully about the topic

Thinking carefully about your topic before you start is crucial. It is possible to consult a wide variety of references, structure a logical argument, present a paper professionally, and even put forward original thoughts, and yet miss the point of the question. In addition, if you are devising your own topic, it is important to note that it forms part of your assessment.

In this respect, your reader will ask: 'Is the topic a relevant and useful question to answer?' and, 'Does the topic make a significant contribution to the wider body of knowledge in the discipline?'

If the topic is provided…

It’s a good idea to write out the question by hand, and then read it several times to yourself. Highlight ‘instructive’ keywords (e.g., ‘review’; ‘discuss’; ‘critically analyze’), as well as, ‘content’ keywords (or nouns). Note, the overall relationship between keywords and any parameters to the question (in terms of limiting commands). If necessary, consult a dictionary to ensure that you fully understand all words. Then, talk to academic staff about your understanding of what the question is asking. Although this isn’t always possible, most staff are obliging, and an important nuance of meaning is often gained.

If you provide the topic…

Begin by reading broadly in an area of interest and become more focused in your reading as you proceed. How do you do this? Check general texts and review articles and look for on-going controversies, ‘gaps’ in the knowledge, and research areas needing review. Also, check the ‘Future Research’ section of journal articles for ideas. You might also consider analyzing in detail a contemporary issue or case study from a theoretical viewpoint.

As you develop your ideas, it is important to:
- Tailor the scope of your topic to your word length.

This means not choosing either:
- a) An ambitious topic which you cannot do justice to in the space available; or
- b) A topic that is too narrow so that it is difficult to meet the word length. In the latter respect, you need to evaluate whether there is enough substantial information available on your topic

- Steer clear of themes that are overworked and ‘stale’.
| Step 2: Think carefully about the topic (continued) | On the other hand, venturing into completely uncharted waters is best avoided too (unless you are completely confident of the challenge!)  
• Steer clear of topics, which are 'too close to home'. This could be a mistake in terms of objectivity  
• Talk to academic staff. They may be able to provide valuable leads. It's also a good idea to always check the suitability of proposed topics  
• Remember that the topic you choose is almost as important as how you handle it |
|---|---|
| Step 3: Gathering information on your topic | Visit the library when you have at least a couple of hours available.  
Unless you are collecting only a few articles, it generally takes at least two hours to conduct an initial search and obtain items.  
If you and your peers have been given a topic, it's also a good idea to check the library straight away (don't even leave it a few days).  
There's nothing worse than finding the shelves bare and having to reserve items.  
First up, consult appropriate CD ROM databases and library on-line catalogues. Quickly identify and list shelf details of library items that look relevant. Once you have located relevant shelves in the library, quickly scan the shelves and take back to your carrel all items that are potentially relevant. Then, by checking the index for keywords (and scanning relevant pages), sort items into two piles: 'useful' and 'unwanted'. With 'useful' items, photocopy relevant sections, or borrow items.  
There are at least two stages to gathering resources (depending on the length of your manuscript).  
Stage One is the most time-consuming and involves consulting the library catalogues, collecting relevant material and photocopying.  
Stage Two occurs after you have read and digested the material. In your reading, you will probably come across articles referred to which would be useful in your research.  
The next step is to return to the library for these items (and perhaps order them through the inter-library system). While this follow-up of material doesn't usually take long, it is best to plan your time to include it. Please also note that you could continue this process ad-nauseum. In this respect, it is best to stick to your timeframe and remember "the law of diminishing returns."  
Consult a wide range of references as this has a major bearing on the quality of your work. However, rather than focus on the sheer quantity of material, aim to include a range of relevant references. A vast reference list in itself is not impressive if items are not particularly relevant.  
Focus on work published in the last ten years, as well as... |
### Step 3: Gathering information on your topic (continued)

- Any work in your area that is historically significant. It is additionally impressive if you can include a few very recent references. This shows that your research is up to date and refers to publications from the last two years.

- Stick to widely recognized and respected journals, and steer clear of journals that are obscure or have a dubious reputation.

- There are some journals which will publish any material – regardless of quality – and thus, they have little credibility in the field. If you are new to the area (and are unsure of the relative status of periodicals) check with someone who is more familiar with the literature.

- With dissertations, make sure you have a good balance between primary and secondary sources. Primary sources are those created by direct observation and include diaries, logbooks, official records and documents, letters, oral histories, photos, maps and empirical data. Secondary sources are written by people with indirect knowledge and rely on primary sources and other secondary sources for their information. The advantage of primary sources is they offer facts otherwise not available on your topic and thus provide a source of ‘freshness’ to your treatment of it. However, they are not necessarily free of bias, and like all information, it is important that primary sources are analyzed critically.

- Do not forget the Internet. It’s amazing what turns up by entering keywords.

- Talk to academic staff. Pick their brains! Do some groundwork before approaching them as you don’t want to sound like a novice when discussing your topic.

### Step 4: Reading and note-taking

- Read material at least twice. The first time to get an overview, the second time to take notes.

- Use sub-headings on different sheets of paper to take notes. However, for maximum efficiency, subheadings should relate to aspects of ideas and themes concerning your topic, rather than articles themselves. Structuring your notes in terms of a linear account of individual readings is not an efficient way to go. It is better to organize and assimilate the information by categorizing as you take notes. This helps you conceptualize the material and makes the task of writing easier too.

- In your notes, jot down where the information came from in brackets and the page number too. This is useful for when you want to refer back to the original source.

- Leave a column on the left side of each sheet where you can write comments.

- If you do this, you can write your immediate response to material, rather than relying on your memory to recall an important point.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step 4: Reading and note-taking (continued)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Be critical in evaluating the literature. Check for: biases, contradictions, flaws in logic, lack of supporting evidence, methodological weaknesses in empirical work and counter-evidence weakening the argument or theory. Keep in mind that your treatment of the topic should not be a mere summary or paraphrase of the sources consulted, but should display a level of interpretation and judgment. As you read, aim to generate new ideas and perspectives on your topic. Examiners love new ideas and insights. They are exciting to read and contribute to the wider body of knowledge. However, you must be able to substantiate your views on the basis of evidence and logic (in a convincing manner) rather than simply generate new ideas. In fact, a novel approach to a topic which is not credibly supported can fall very flat and is a big no-no. Try to keep your notes short. If you don’t, you’ll soon be back where you started – trying to separate essential from nonessential information. However, even when you keep your notes short, you’ll probably end up with more notes than you can actually use. This is normal and is part of the process of paring down information to its essential elements. If you record a direct quote, be sure to enclose it in quotation marks. This helps to avoid plagiarism later when you are writing your draft. You may also wish to document your references as you read. To do this, keep index cards handy for recording references details and use a separate card for each reference. When you come to compile your reference page, cards are then shuffled into alphabetical order.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step 5: Plan Your Attack</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Read your notes a few times to gain a ‘big picture’ perspective. Then, organize subheadings into a logical order and prepare a draft outline from sub-headings. As you read through your notes, you will find that a logical structure will naturally evolve.</td>
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<th>Step 6: Write the first draft</th>
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<td>The trick with a first draft is aim to put down your ideas without fussing over your expression. If you get pedantic with your prose as you initially write your ideas, it tends to impede the flow. It is also more efficient to tidy the text when you do your second draft. Start with the middle sections of your paper first, and then write the conclusion, and then the introduction. If you write the introduction last it takes about half the time than otherwise, and it comes together better. Structure your middle sections using the following standard format. The first line of each paragraph is an introductory statement for the content of that paragraph. Sentences, which follow the introductory statement, provide supporting evidence, and flesh it out. The last line of each</td>
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Course Information
### Step 6: Write the first draft (continued)

Paragraph is a statement which either:

i) Summarizes information in that paragraph and relates it back to the topic or,

ii) Provides a link to the content of the following section.

The introduction of your paper ‘sets the scene’ for your treatment of the topic. This can be done by providing historical background, a brief anecdote, relevant statistics, and/or defining the main concepts to be discussed (particularly important where jargon is central to your topic). Your introduction should also explicitly state your position on any defining argument or issue, as well as briefly outlining the structure of your paper. The reader should not come across any surprises after reading your introduction in terms of your position on the topic, your general approach, or any parameters to your discussion.

The perspective of your conclusion looks backwards, forwards and then pans to ‘the big picture’. This means it recaps and draws together your main points, as well as looking to the future in terms of suggesting areas of research. You will also need to point out any limitations of your research (and be just as critical in evaluating your own work as you are with the work of others). In addition, the focus of your conclusion should ‘to the big picture’ in terms of the overall significance of the points you have raised. However, be careful here that you do not introduce any new material – your conclusion should also not contain any surprises, and is not the place to introduce a major discussion. Also, note that a powerful conclusion is often thought provoking in that it tends to raise more questions than it answers.

Focus consistently on your topic. Readers hate it when you discuss a point tangentially, opaquely, or even worse, irrelevantly. Often a point can seem relevant to you but its relevance is not that clear to your reader. When this happens, relate the point back to the topic and explicitly state its relevance. You may find when you do this, that the point is not that relevant after all, and therefore you choose to delete it. On the other hand, a point that is somewhat subsidiary, but is made relevant, can often add weight to the overall strength of an argument.

Use direct quotes sparingly, particularly lengthy passages. Indeed, it is often more appropriate to paraphrase the words of others rather than use their exact words. However, where the commentary of others is particularly powerful because it is pithy, poignant or outrageous, it can add to the overall strength of your writing. However, the effect will soon be lost if you overuse such commentary and so finding a balance is important.

Aim for a balanced approach in your treatment of the topic. That is, you need to consider all major perspectives on your topic, and both sides of any argument. In fact, taking a one-sided approach does little in terms of achieving persuasiveness, and ultimately is not
| Step 7: Write the second draft | After completing your first draft, it’s a good idea to put it aside for a few days. This is important as often problems are more easily detected after you’ve had a complete break from your work. 

Try a number of different strategies to check the ‘read ability’ of your draft. For example, you can read it out loud. As you read it through, watch for clumsy expression, sentences that are too long, and sections that don’t flow. A general rule of thumb is if you find yourself stumbling or faltering along the way, the sentence or section you’re reading needs revising. In addition, you can read your draft from the hard copy rather than your computer screen. This works more effectively as it provides an infinitely better feel for the text. You can also give your draft to a couple of friends to read. In this respect, it is a good idea to give your work to someone who is conversant with the area (for ‘informed’ advice) as well as someone who is completely outside the area (for valuable hints on clarity and logic). Finally, you might also consider professional editorial assistance, particularly if English is your second language. As you revise your work, you may come across problems where you are not happy with your handling of a section. In such cases, ask yourself if you can leave it out. Often it is better to exclude discussion of a point than handle it badly. Though, obviously you need to evaluate the relative importance of the point and whether it can be simply deleted. Alternatively, try explaining the idea out loud as if you were talking to a friend (in terms of, ‘What I am arguing here is …’). When you articulate your ideas this way, you often clarify how to rework the section. |

| Step 8: Prepare your final copy. | If your presentation is sloppy you will lose marks even if your paper is otherwise brilliant. This means there should be no degraded or faded print, no typos, and no errors in grammar or spelling. 

Your project should be printed on white letter size paper with double spacing between lines. Type font should be plain, and not too large or small. Around 12pt in size is usually adequate. Pages should be numbered and a title page included. For specific instructions check with your supervisor. 

Attention to detail is really the key to preparing your final copy. In particular, take a meticulous approach to |

| Course Information | considered scholarly. 

Conceptualize material in terms of its broader theoretical significance. A theoretical treatment of material is desirable as it demonstrates a ‘higher-order’ analysis, and hence, your intellectual sophistication and maturity. In this respect, you need to evaluate your evidence in terms of an overriding theoretical framework and ask, ‘How does this evidence fit with the theory?’ |
compiling your reference list. This is important as you can easily make an error here. The task is somewhat tedious, and nearing the end, you tend to become eager to finish. Be especially careful that the list includes every reference you cite in the body of your paper. It is not uncommon for people assessing your work to check these details.

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<tr>
<th>Ten Style Tips</th>
<th>1. Use ‘Plain English’. This means writing simply and directly.</th>
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<td>2. Use the active voice not the passive voice.</td>
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<td>3. Make your writing ‘tight’ and ‘crisp’ by editing out unnecessary words.</td>
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<td>4. Avoid unnecessary abstraction and jargon that has not been defined.</td>
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<td>5. Avoid too many long sentences. If necessary, split long sentences into two (a general rule here is one idea per sentence).</td>
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<td>6. Vary the beginnings of sentences to maintain your reader’s interest.</td>
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<td>7. Use sub-headings but do not over-use them.</td>
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<td>8. Avoid one-sentence paragraphs.</td>
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<td>9. Ensure that transitions between paragraphs flow.</td>
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<td>10. Maintain a formal, objective tone.</td>
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Finally, remember that in your first draft you write for yourself (by aiming to put your ideas down). In your second draft, however, you write for your reader.

**Note:** A Senior Capstone Handbook will be made available

**Due date:** Finals Week
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<th>Grade</th>
<th>Description</th>
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| **A** | Demonstrates imagination, originality or flair, based on proficiency in all learning outcomes of the unit; work is interesting or surprisingly exciting, challenging, well read or scholarly.  
-For this assignment an A response answers all the set questions in a very informed, applied, cogent manner. |
| **B** | Demonstrates awareness and understanding of deeper and less obvious aspects of the unit, such as ability to identify and debate critical issues or problems, ability to solve non-routine problems, ability to adapt and apply ideas to new situations, and ability to evaluate new ideas.  
-For this assignment a B response answers all the set questions in an informed manner and applied manner. |
| **C** | Demonstrates ability to use and apply fundamental concepts and skills of the unit, going beyond mere replication of content knowledge or skill to show understanding of key ideas, awareness of their relevance, some use of analytical skills, and some originality or insight.  
-For this assignment a C response answers all questions correctly. There is a basic application of ideas. |
| **D** | Satisfies all of the basic learning requirements of the unit, such as knowledge of fundamental concepts and performance of basic skills; demonstrates satisfactory, adequate, competent, or capable achievement of the objectives of the unit.  
-For this assignment a D response answers most the questions correctly. Theses answers cover only the fundamentals and lack application. |
| **F** | Fails to satisfy some of the basic requirements of the assessment task. |